

Subject: KENTA KOBASHI! gets his ass handed to him by MITSUHARA MISAWA! MEIKO SATOMURA! kicks ass against SONOKO KATO! kicks ass against NAGASHIMA! kicks ass against SUGAR SATO! JUSHIN THUNDER LIGER! kicks ass against SHINJIRO OHTANI! and other stuff I saw this week!

HOWDY~!

Welcome to DEATH VALLEY DRIVER VIDEO REVIEW #60!

WOO-HOO! I watched a big ass batch of tapes this week as I delved deeply into the wads of tape that the IMMORTAL GLENN- defender of the faith against the Kawada-addled Crow-boy, and Our Man Hesham sent me! WOO-HOO!

!@!@!@!@!@NEW JAPAN TV 10/25/97 taped 10/19 from Kobe World Hall

Fujinami/ Kimura/ Nogami vs Hiro Saito/ Ohara/ Goto: HEY! Goto and Ohara jump to nWo (getting their own nifty shirts in the process) and they actual kinda rouse a semblance of interest in Hi-Sing InSHINGUNSHIN in me. I could never get into all the old guys wearing the little red outfits- except for Koshinaka, but now I can get into them hating the dirty filthy traitors that jumped to nWo Japan. The highlights of the jump were pretty cool- very 1988 NWA. It looks like this was all a move to build up the heat in the Chono/Koshinaka feud they've started building towards the last couple weeks, which I'll be digging the most- in that they are in on Chono DragonScrewing the crud out of Kosh's bad leg. They have a competent wrestling match with the added heat making it more than just a perfunctory match. Goto doesn't make me sick and Ohara is the oldest guy a man can dig. They bust up the HI flag at the end to further infuriate Devastation Inc Japan (or something).

Hashimoto/ Nakanishi/ Kojima vs nWo Sting/ Tenzan/ Michael Wallstreet: Japan is an amazing country in the respect that when an American wrestler gets over there, he feels the urge to take his or her game to a higher level- Steve Williams has had matches in Japan that shatters any effort he's ever had on the states, Buff Bagwell becomes a Johnny Ace level stiff-worker gaijin when he gets to stand on the BVD symbol in New Japan Rings, Chavo Guerrero Jr adjusted to the style and has become a Cruiserweight to watch. So it of course it should come to no surprise that Michael Wallstreet sucks just as much green donkey lungs in New Japan as he does stinking up the rings of WCW. Tenzan is on a hotstreak and nWo Sting is the Grand New Creation that has emerged from 1997- a wrestler who by virtue of wrestling in Japan every day for eight months, has become a very good worker, so this match wasn't a total waste. Wallstreet luckily stays out of the ring for the most part, but when he is in, GOD! does he suck. Nakanishi continues to become SEVERELY okay as he suplexes Wallstreet on his head. Hash kicks the hell outta folks- with Tenzan taking the brunt. The Tenzan/Kojima sequences definately will be repeated verbatim in five years for the IWGP crown. Kojima is looking pretty dang good these days.

Shinjiro Otani vs Jushin Thunder Liger for J-Crown: Oh MAN! It's good to see a Liger singles match after the 3 month or so lay off on NJ TV. Ohtani kicks the little slump he's been in since

getting the belts and these two fellers deliver the goods. This match isn't as good as the one from earlier this year, but Ohtani took some big steps in selling in this match, in that it was more of a New Japan Jr vs a New Japan Jr as opposed to Old Veteran vs Underdog youngster which was the story of the first one. Ohtani is the champion now and it took him four title defenses in to realize that he has to wrestle like he is the MAN, since he is the MAN, and Ohtani pulls the transition off with ease- since he really has to beat Liger in a defense or he's basically Kobashi Not Beating Misawa when he had the Triple Crown. Ohtani hits the SWANKY High Altitude Double Dropkick To The Face While Liger Is In The Tree Of Woe. Liger reciprocates with dropkick to the face as Ohtani is in the corner. Liger destroys Ohtani with a super PHAT ASS Plancha Enorme off the Top rope. Liger hits a Fisherman Buster and then the TRULY grotesque TopRope Fisherman Buster Suplex, which Ohtani kicks out of. Liger tries another, but Ohtani reverses it into SuperPower Slam (I guess). Ohtani hits a funtabulous German Suplex on the way to a Dragon into a double leg lariat for the win, after selling the Liger Palm Of Death like only Ohtani can. Somewhere in there Liger does the worst La Majistral on earth ever. This was Great! Koji comes to congratulate him and get a shot in on the old bastard.

Sasaki/ Yamazaki vs Chono/ Muto for IWGP tag titles: This was pretty okay. Yamazaki gets Muto to actually work a little and Chono looks all cool and shit. Sasaki SELLS! Postmatch was better as Mutoh and Chono say "Fuck You, MotherFucker!" a whole lot. nWo Japan rules!

@\$@\$@\$@\$@\$@ALL JAPAN 10/26/97 taped 10/21 from Budokan

Mitsuharu Misawa vs Kenta Kobashi for Triple Crown: The Kobashi vs Misawa section of the Men Who Challenge Misawa is my least favorite of the All Japan Big Four Endless Recombination of Matches. Kawada vs Misawa is always stiff as shit and Kawada beats the holy fudge out of Misawa and then Kawada gets his ass kicked by Misawa in a real spine-fusing way- OR Kawada kicks the shit out of Misawa for over forty-five minutes straight and you know its going to be a draw. There has been one six minute variation on this theme. The Misawa vs Taue matches are always INSANELY cool because there are no highspots, it's 100% psychology, there is a monklike adherence to total stoicism, and you never know who's gonna win. Misawa matching up to the lumpy coolness of Taue while dragging Baba's Lovechild to a great match is always a thing of beauty to behold. LOOK! Neither broke a smile the WHOLE TIME! YESSSS! The problem with the Kobashi vs Misawa match is that it basically starts becoming Math Wrestling 301: $n(\text{Tiger Suplexes}) + n(\text{Rolling Elbows}) + n(\text{Tiger Drivers}) + 1 \text{ Tiger Driver } 91 =$ Kenta crying like a little girl as they scrape him off the mat and Misawa lies there and stares blankly at the ceiling in his form of post-match glee and revelry. MEANWHILE, (lariats)to the nth power + (uracans) to the nth power + (released German Suplexes) to the nth power + 1 vestigial moonsault + 25 cents = will get you a cup of coffee, because you ain't winning today cry-boy. This one was great though. HELL! all the matches between these four are great! It's freakin MISAWA for GOD's sake! Misawa starts adding up the finishers to polish off Giant Swing and Rolling Cradle boy early on, hitting a Tiger Suplex after potatoing the spunky old young guy with elbows to the head. As it looks like this is going to super by-the-book Misawa Defending the Triple Crown Against Kobashi Match, Kobashi puts together an ASS-STOMPING offensive flurry for every Misawa offensive flurry making it all dramatic and whatnot.

WOO-HOO! I DID THE MATH!

If K=Kobashi and M=Misawa, then K [1 Flying Plancha] + M[2 Rolling Elbow] - K [2 Powerbombs+ 1 missed powerbomb attempt] + M [1 Tiger Suplex] - K [INSANE POWERBOMB OF MISAWA ONTO THE TOP TURNBUCKLE SO THAT KENTA CATCHES MITSUHARA'S BASE OF THE NECK ON THE TOP TURNBUCKLE+ 1 PHATass Released Dragon Suplex+ 1 vestigal moonsault] + M [Tiger Suplex + 1 elbow + 1 spinning heel kick] - K [1 lariat] + M [1 Released Dragon + 1 Elbow + 1 Tiger Driver + 1 Elbow] - K [1 lariat] + M [Rolling Elbow] - K [Rolling Spin Kick] + M [2(Elbows) + 1 TigerDriver 91 = a dead Kobashi. Multiply all this by wads of psychology and stiffness and shit. YOU WANT ALLLLLLL THIS!

#%#%#%#%#%#%NEW JAPAN 11/1/97 taped 10/22

El Samurai vs Koji Kanemoto: Not the match of the year that the last one these two had was, but still a freakin GREAT match. Koji and El beat the crap out of each other, with Koji supplying the dickishness we've come to expect. Koji takes a bigger beating in this one than in the last one.

Liger/ Honaga/ Ka Shin vs Otani/ Takaiwa/ Negro Casas: This was pretty great. Ka Shin is really starting to produce for the Liger Army now, as he is the out-of-control young upstart who is getting his ass kicked regularly by the Kanemoto League of Penises. Takaiwa Welcomes Him to New Japan with the SWANK Death Valley Driver. Ohtani then suplexes the crap out of him. Honaga comes in and adds his Arn Anderson-esque no-bullcrap butt kicking aspect to the match, achieving a Kanemoto level of dickishness at some points in his old frame to even out the sides. Ka Shin gets all worked up at the end, trying to get to Ohtani, as if he doesn't have enough to worry about with his match with Koji coming up.

Fujinami/ Kimura/ Kobayashi/ Nogami vs Chono/ Hiro Saito/ Goto/ Ohara: I can't figure out this one. Ohara gets an HI guy in the pinning position, Chono throws each of his two new recruits out of the ring and gets the pin for himself. I dunno.

Sasaki/ Hashimoto/ Yamazaki/ Yasuda vs Muto/ nWo Sting/ Wallstreet/Tenzan: Only the entire Island of Japan and I like the whole nWo Japan angle, but my eyes glaze over when I have to watch the SECOND Wallstreet match from Japan. Somebody wins. There were lots of clotheslines. Yasuda, Yasuda, Yasuda.

\$^A\$^A\$^A\$^AGAEA G-PANIC SPECIAL 11/1/97 taped on 10/10 and 10/19

Meiko Satomura vs Toshiyo Yamada - Pancrase rules: This was really good. Meiko Satomura is REALLY starting to pull away from the rest of the highly talented GAEA youngsters and this match is a good indication of why. Meiko is SOOO freakin fast that she looks like an actual threat to the magnificent codger called Yamada in an actual Pancrase rules match (well sorta). Satomura is so intense in ANY style but is capable of showing the concept of intensity in any

setting. In this one is in the quickness of applying the submission out of the ride, she is absolutely Sakuraba-esque. Yamada wins, but she shouldn't have.

Sugar Sato vs Chikayo Nagashima: This was REALLY good. Sugar and Nagashima are REALLY starting to pull away from the rest of the highly talented GAEA youngsters. Nagashima is becoming quite the misplaced luchadore and Sugar is becoming a tiny punkin version Ric Flair- being all psychology-laden and high spotless. These two hit everything perfectly and with amazing quickness. Sugar busts up her partners leg real bad with some fat ass Dragon screws and kneedrops on the knee. Chikayo flies all over the place and hits some tripendicular highspots.

Meiko Satomura vs Sonoko Kato: This was great! Sonoko Kato is really pulling away from the rest of the highly talented GAEA youngsters and the key is STIFFNESS! These go at it like Glen Campbell and Tanya Tucker after too much cocaine. Kato is starting to feel overshadowed by the real deal that is Meiko Satomura and I feel A TRULY INCREDIBLE youngster feud coming up.

Kato/ Satomura vs Sugar Sato/ Nagashima: THIS WAS GREAT! These four always deliver when in with each other and this was REALLY no exception. Sugar hitting her eighties old school holds, Nagashima flying all over the place and being all Lucha Libre-like, Sonoko Kato kicking the crap out of people and Satomura doing all of the above plus flying into submission holds from any position like a less irritating Tamara in RINGS. GET ALL THIS!

Aja Kong/ Yoshiko Tamura vs Chigusa Nagayo/ Sakura Hirota: Hirota is in the position that Meiko was in last year- Chigusa's protege until she gets over. Hirota isn't anywhere near what Satomura was last year at this time, but she is a little bump-monster and isn't bad by ANY stretch of the imagination. Your basic protege match where the old gals sell a bit and then piss off the other matriarch by crushing the other's protege in some way. In this one, look for the decapitating Uracan by Aja on Hirota to cheese off Chigusa. Hopefully this sudden hatred of HyperVisual Arson by GAEA, AJW, JWP and the worthless LLPW is all a work and that Aja vs GAEA feud can come to fruition- because world needs an evil, bitchy Aja Kong right now.

^^ !@!@! SINGLES #\$\$\$# GOING %^%^%^% STEADY @&@&@&@ ~~ <>

#1 with bullett that I watched over at Tim's- Chris Chetti/Mikey Whipwreck vs Tracy Smothers/Little Guido (ECW; Halloween 97 Stamford): GOLLY! the FBI are the best tagteam in the United States! This match kicks ass as probably the four best workers in ECW (Well, except for the AWESOME TAZ!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!) beat the holy shit out of themselves. Tracy Smothers is the backbone of this baby, being the best worker in ECW in a walk- with the other three really holding up their end of the bargain. Chetti is GONNA be SOOO ALL THAT! Mikey is becoming a fat boy but he can still work so I'm digging it the most (I remember when I was 21 and started applying the pounds.... ah, Magnum.....). The pinnacle of life as I know it is the flag that the FBI have now- the flag of Italy with the big Don Tommy Rich's big head airbrushed in

the middle of it. ABSOLUTELY NUMBER ONE AND THE BEST. And TAZ really sucks it raw, for all you sarcastically impaired ECW fans.

#2 but still climbing the charts from the Mighty HESHAM- Leaping Lanny Poffo/Randy Savage vs the ROCK AND ROLL EXPRESS in Memphis in the early 80's. See your local redneck video store for copies of this. :) HEY! Leapin Lanny was a better worker than Macho Man in the early 80's? This I did not know. RnR were REALLY Great back then, though it was the same match with Morton getting the crap kicked out of him. This was all over the place as it spilled onto the floor, went onto tables (which was actually devastating when used to facilitate piledrivers in a territory where the move was protected. Gibson wasn't a load yet and Lanny was a freakin Guerrerro when it came to workrate and agility. DIG IT!

#3 but holding steady, from Quebrada Boy- EMI Motokawa/Jaguar Yokota vs Shiratori/Yuki Lee (Fuyuki Force Group Samurai TV special from sometime in the time continuum.) FFG is trying, in one Special, to be the severest form of WCW on the planet today- the undercards are real good with this match and Yoshida vs Mima Shimoda underneath mixed in with Shark Tsuchiya- world's worst wrestler vs RIE underneath, and the TRULY GODAWFUL and WCW bound Fuyuki/Jado/Gedo trios matches on the top. Emi rules it in this as the only non-Jd'er. Her IWA status doesn't give a hint to the fact that she has become a good wrestler. Yuki Lee is as mediocre but not as divinely hot, minky, and goddesslike as her Jd' compadre Shiratori, but both kinda just stay outta of the way and let the matriarch and Comeback-of-the-Year candidate Jaguar Yokota and the spunky, pasty Emi do the heavy lifting. Jaguar starts off in a flurry of AJW roll-up wildness. Emi does her bizarro submission/lucha matwork style that we've all come to love and respect- throwing in a Dos Caras over and around roll-up into a submission here and there and a cool leg submission out of running the ropes. This was made to look SO much better considering that Fuyuki and Company wrestle the best of Big Japan somewhere else on this tape, but it's still a good match worth getting a hold of.

#4 from that wacky indie label NWC-Hardcore Redneck Saloon Wrestling- Dynamo Kid vs Will O the Wisp in a Belt on a Rope Match (Also from Tim's house). This match was great despite the screwy ending. Dynamo kid is a seventeen year-old (Tim said) phenom that has a beautiful Hurricanrana for a whiteboy from North Carolina. WotW is the bemasked Hardy Boy and he is sufficiently awesome as he was in that wild affair with Surge. The gimmick is GREAT in that none of the fat asses in the audience or fat ass heavyweights in either of the big two could POSSIBLY win this match- It's a belt on the end of one of those ropes that I could never climb all the way up in gym class, but it was ALSO draped across the ceiling joists so it was also a commando crawl over to the belt. All this while they kick each other a lot. This was great! There was lotsa of insane highspots to get to the gruelling climbing point. Find somebody who has access to this stuff- and watch out for the Marlboro-smoking coeds.

NEXT WEEK: Crush Gals! Lucha Libre! AJW! Whatever else I can get in during Thanksgiving vacation. Also the Man With Extra Reviews!

NANIWA~!

Dean Rasmussen, Juventudiac.

"Your eyes are older but they still glisten." -David Gedge, Wedding
Present, World's Greatest Band.